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IN MOMENTS OF ANXIETY

In that far-away time when there was peace we had our days of sorrow and apprehension, but now that war has come upon us they cease to be days, and become time itself. Individually and as a nation we live in anxious thought of the morrow. Once we never expected to fear bulletins of battles, and war seemed an anachronism. Now we increasingly know war as other nations know it—an infection of intimate misery, a relentless arbiter of national futures.

How shall fathers and mothers endure the silence that closes in on their sons' fortunes? How shall patriots endure delays in the victory of human rights?

The Christian must answer now, or forever keep his peace.



Shall we tell men to find peace of soul in their own helplessness when in the grip of fate?

Shall we tell men that the justice of our cause and the God we worship always give victories to the armies who fight for righteousness?

Shall we tell them to forget the realities and quiet their souls by erecting desires into religious faith?



As honest men we cannot utter such messages.

We are not helpless in the midst of fate, or why should we need struggle for righteousness?

Success does not always immediately attend the struggle for right. Remember Calvary.

Prayer is no magical protection against bullets. If it were, there would be few deaths in battle.

Intensity of desire, faith in God himself, no more guarantees immunity from suffering to champions of righteousness today than in the days of the prophets.

Our first duty is to see straight and think straight; to accustom ourselves to realities even though they be stern; to tear optimism as well as pessimism from our souls.

Self-deception whether in individuals or nations is fatal to reasonable faith. God is not the God of a dream world or of a world that ought to be but is not. He is a God of a world that really is and really is in the making. We trust Him to give not what we want but what social evolution under his guidance makes possible. We live today as seeing that which is invisible.



For truth and immediate victory are not inevitably connected. The ultimate victory of love and righteousness, justice and democracy, is beyond question. Let us lean upon that truth. The projection of the tendencies of history into the future, which is only another way of saying God's will, makes it beyond question.

Justification of faith in God and Christian hope does not lie in the immediate achievement of our righteous desires, but in our power to contribute to the doing of God's will on earth.

The ideals of Jesus are worth standing for, even though their champions meet defeat. And therefore the message of the Christian is not one of hasty optimism or of weak despair. Whatever be the sorrow or the rejoicing of the moment, it is the uncompromising proclamation that the ultimate outcome will be, not the defeat, but the triumph, of forces which further human justice and brotherhood. What matters the present if with courage strengthened by our faith in a present God we help shape the future? What happens to individuals in the process of this triumph is secondary. What they *do* matters much both to their character and to their successors. For though they fail, they will have imbedded their influence and service in the God-directed forces of social evolution. Their labor is not in vain, because there is a God of justice and love. We who in confidence and patience labor to make a world more worthy of its God, will have helped make the Kingdom of God possible.